

28 PETALING

CREATING A BETTER WORLD



Can Scouts Not Believe In God?

Posted in [General Scouting](#), [Resources](#), [Scouting Around The World](#), [Scouting In Malaysia](#) on April 20, 2009 by kariBUP

*An interesting article from [WOSM](#) which I think many adult leaders face, especially in Malaysia.

Q - Can Scouts not believe in God? We have Buddhist Scouts, and Buddhism doesn't foresee God's existence.

A - One of the three main principles of Scouting is "Duty to God". However, the word "God" can mean different things and nobody has the right to impose his or her concept of God on other people. For example, it is true, as you say, that Buddhists do not share the concept of a "personal" God like Christian, Muslim or Jewish people. Does this mean that Buddhist people are atheists?

The concept of atheism is very tricky. Let me give you an example - a Hindu mystic, Swami Vivekananda, said: "In the same way that certain religions in the world call a man who does not believe in a God existing outside his person an atheist, we, for our part, say that an atheist is a man who does not believe in himself. Not believing in the splendour of one's own soul - that's what we call atheism."

In the constitution of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, you can find the following definition of "Duty to God":

"Adherence to spiritual principles, loyalty to the religion that expresses them and acceptance of the duties resulting therefrom."

There are three parts in this definition: (1) adherence to spiritual principles, (2) loyalty to the religion that expresses them and (3) acceptance of the duties resulting therefrom.

I think that any believer, including Buddhists, can agree on this definition.

Download the chapter 7 of "The Green Island", a novel telling how a national programme team in a given country of Central and Eastern Europe is working to develop the youth programme for their Scout association. Chapter 7 is about spiritual development. It explains how we should understand "Duty to God" and how Scouting can contribute to spiritual development, which was also called by our Founder Baden-Powell "a natural form of religion":

"The natural form of religion is so simple that a child can understand it. It comes from within, from conscience, from observation, from love, for use in all that he does. It is not a formality or a dogmatic dressing done from outside, put on for Sunday wear. It is, therefore, a true part of his character, a development of soul, and not a veneer that may peel off."

Announcement

28th Petaling has just created a community group on Facebook! All former and current Scouts are welcomed to join. [28TH PJ Scouts Facebook Group](#)

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You could also download the background paper and the report on the WONDERforum recently organised on spiritual development. There you will find a lot of information related to your question, particularly a definition of the “Scout approach” to spiritual development:

The Scout Approach

The role of the Scout leader relating to spiritual development is not to give religious instruction, nor to tack religious observances onto Scout activities. It is to use the kind of experiences offered by Scouting to help young people discover a spiritual reality and incorporate it into their own lives. In fact, Scouting proposes a 5-step approach to spiritual development.

1. Enable young people to experience spirituality through Scout activities

In many cultures, the term “God” designates, on the one hand, the Creator or source of everything and, on the other hand, absolute goodness or a principle of salvation which pervades the history of humanity. There are thus two possible ways of discovering God: by exploring the wonders of creation and nature; by experiencing life within a human community.

Traditional Scout activities do indeed permit these types of experiences:

- Hiking, exploring, camping and actions to preserve the environment all enable young people to discover and admire the wonders of nature and life itself.
- Welcoming, learning to listen, building relationships with other people, however poor or destitute, showing compassion, sharing; co-operating within a team, sharing responsibilities, serving others, etc. All these are activities which aim at discovering and developing a human community.

2. Making time for young people to discover and express the meaning of life

A Scout leader also needs to propose opportunities for evaluating and celebrating experiences, in other words, to provide activities which enable young people to analyse their own experiences in the light of the Scout Law and Promise, in order to discover their meaning and value. It is through these kinds of activities, which include moments of silence, meditation and expression, that young people can experience the need to pray and worship.

3. Help each individual to identify with his or her spiritual and religious heritage

A major concern is how to help each young person make links between the experiences gained within Scouting and the spiritual and religious heritage which has been transmitted to him or her by the family and local community. With the onset of adolescence, it is normal for a young person to challenge this heritage, question its relevance and have doubts. It is necessary to pass through this stage in order to truly adopt this heritage and develop an adult approach to spirituality, religion and faith.

4. Encourage internalisation and personal commitment

Spiritual development only has any sense if it becomes internalised and leads to personal commitment. This is why one of the essential criteria for progression is the application of acquired spiritual and religious values in daily life.

5. Develop open and respectful attitudes

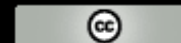
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One of the fundamental convictions of the Scout Movement is that spiritual development should bring people together in fellowship, instead of separating them or bringing them into conflict. Since modern societies are those which thrive on communication and exchange and comprise a multiplicity of cultures and faiths, it is essential to prepare young people for such diversity. They need to overcome prejudices and develop open-mindedness and respect for faiths which are different from their own, whilst being able to express their personal convictions without aggressiveness.

(WOSM)

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Japan to host 23rd World Scout Jamboree in 2015

Posted in [General Scouting](#), [Latest Scouting News](#), [Scouting Around The World](#), [Up Coming Events](#) on August 18, 2008 by kariBUP

Japan has just won the bid to host the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in 2015. Announced in the Plenary Hall at ICC Jeju on Jeju Island during the 38th World Scout Conference, Japan was ecstatic to hear the results with the Chairman of the bidding committee, Mr. Osamu Hirose saying: We are very happy and we are sure that the Jamboree will be a very good opportunity to educate young people, and also a very good chance to show how Scouts around the world are creating a better world.

The Jamboree will be located on Kirarahama or Kirara Beach in Yamaguchi Prefecture. The Japanese word “kirara” means mica: Kirara Beach offers a beautiful landscape in front of which the Seto Inland Sea glitters in the sunlight just like mica.

(WOSM)

[Yamaguchi Japan](#) (Official candidate website)

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Tornado Hits BSA Scout Camp

Posted in [General Scouting](#), [Latest Scouting News](#), [Scouting Around The World](#) on June 15, 2008 by kariBUP



Four Scouts died and 48 others wounded as a BSA camp was hit by a tornado last Wednesday. At 6:53 pm local time, the EF3 tornado struck the Little Sioux Scout Ranch during a Pahuk Pride National Youth Leadership Training Program (NYLT). The tornado was one of 28 reported late Wednesday moving across eastern Kansas and into Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota. Scouts attending the week long Pahuk Pride event at the camp were from eastern Nebraska and western Iowa.

The National Weather Service office in Valley, Nebraska, said they issued a tornado warning 12 minutes before the tornado hit the camp. A tornado siren went off in the camp, but the Scouts had already taken shelter. According to a camp counselor, most injuries and fatalities happened after a small cabin where the Scouts were taking shelter was hit by the tornado. Many of the injuries is reported to have happened after a brick fireplace in the cabin was ripped by the tornado during the incident.

The ones who were killed in the incident are Josh Fennen, 13; Sam Thomsen, 13; Ben Petrzilka, 14; and Aaron Eilerts, 14.

We are deeply saddened by the horrific impact of the devastating storms that tore through western Iowa yesterday. To the families of those who were affected, we extend our deepest sympathies and concern. To the leaders, Scouts, and emergency personnel who responded so quickly and effectively, we extend our sincerest gratitude. - (BSA)

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Why did Baden Powell choose Africa as his last home?

Posted in [General Scouting](#), [Resources](#), [Scouting Around The World](#) on May 20, 2008 by kariBUP



At about 100 kilometres away from the Africa Regional office of World Scouting, in Nairobi, stands PAXTU, the last residence of the Founder of Scouting, Lord Baden Powell. Towards the sunset of his fulfilled life, the Chief Scout of the World had chosen to retire at the foot Mount Kenya, in the area of the Central Highlands Region, in Nyeri.

(WOSM)

[Read the rest.](#)

<http://www.paxtu.org/>

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World AIDS Orphans Day

Posted in [Up Coming Events](#) on May 6, 2008 by kariBUP



[World AIDS Orphans Day](#) will occur on 7 May. More than 25 million children worldwide have lost one or both parents to AIDS – equivalent to the number of people living in New York, Paris, Rome and Bangkok combined. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, 12 million children have been orphaned by the pandemic. In addition to being especially vulnerable to all forms of exploitation, these children face financial difficulties, disease, and stigmatisation.

(WOSM)

[Read the rest.](#) (WOSM)

<http://www.worldaidsorphans.org/>

<http://www.afxb.org/>

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